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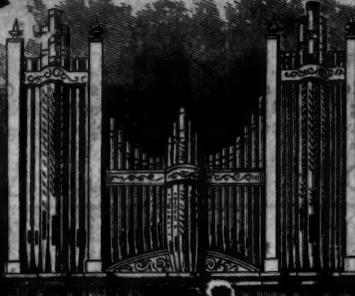
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# THE NONCONFORMIST

## MUSICAL JOURNAL:

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW  
Devoted to the interests of Worship Music in the  
Nonconformist Churches.  
EDITED BY E. MINSHALL.

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OUR first word in this first number of another volume of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL must be one wishing all our readers a very happy and prosperous New Year. May the many enthusiastic workers in connection with Church Music have much encouragement and abundant success throughout the year. It is hard work to get some of the old-fashioned people to move out of the old ruts. "As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be" is their creed. Rapid strides have, however, been made during the past few years, and if all interested in improving our Worship Music will go on pegging away, the time cannot be far distant when the Service of Praise will be much more devotional, and much more effective in every way than it is at present. With that aim in view we will all go forward into 1895.

The commencement of another volume affords us the opportunity for asking our readers very kindly to oblige us by bringing the JOURNAL under the notice of those interested in our work. We will gladly send specimen copies for distribution, where they can be judiciously used. We shall be glad if Choir Secretaries will mention the JOURNAL to their respective choirs and try to secure regular readers. We venture to hope that there is much in our pages that will interest and instruct choir

members. To some choirs we already send a parcel of copies regularly each month. If organists, choir-masters, and secretaries, would help us in this direction we should esteem it a favour. Surely there are some singers in every Nonconformist choir throughout the land sufficiently enthusiastic in the improvement of our Church music to be anxious to know what is being done in other places, and to be kept well up to date in all that concerns it. From the commencement we have been greatly encouraged by the interest shown in the JOURNAL, and to many friends who have helped us in a very practical manner to make it the success it is, we would tender our best thanks. We, however, want to increase our band of workers and thus appeal especially to organists and choir secretaries. If they will interest their singers in the JOURNAL, and thus secure orders for a monthly parcel, our circulation ought to be considerably enlarged. We shall be pleased to hear from any willing to help us in this way.

In reply to a correspondent, we may say that copies of all the anthems published in the JOURNAL can be had separately at our office. These are printed on much better paper than that used for the JOURNAL copies, the latter being necessarily thin in order to keep within the halfpenny postal limit.

We have every reason to be satisfied with the reception given to No. 1 of *Modern Organ Music*, published on October 1st. We have not seen an adverse criticism of it, and we have received many kindly letters from organists referring to it in words of high commendation. No. 2, which contains three pieces in various styles by Mr. James Lyon, is now ready, and will be found fully equal to the first number.

In connection with the Exeter Hall Thursday, Concerts, Mr. Minshall proposes to perform "Christ and His Soldiers," with orchestral accompaniments, on Thursday, March 7th. To augment his own Choral Society, he will be glad to have the assistance of any choirs who know the work and have copies. Will choirs willing to assist kindly reply as early as possible, stating the number of voices?

A competition of Soprano vocalists for a prize of Two Guineas, to be awarded by the audience, will take place at Exeter Hall, on Thursday, February 7th. A similar competition for Contralto vocalists will be held on February 28th. Vocalists wishing to compete should communicate with us at once.

The books for the Nonconformist Choir Union Festival in June will shortly be ready. An early application to the Hon. Sec., Mr. T. R. Croger, 114, Wood Street, E.C., is desirable, in order to secure a supply, as only a limited number are printed. In former years many late-comers have been disappointed.

We notice with pleasure that a Nonconformist Choir Union is being formed in Cardiff. Fourteen

choirs have already intimated their willingness to join. We hope these capable Welsh singers will affiliate themselves with the London Union and take part in the Crystal Palace Festival in June next.

A correspondent writes : "I am in possession of a violin bow made by 'Dodd' and stamped with his name. Now, on reading up the subject in various books, especially Fleming's 'Old Violins,' I cannot make clear which Dodd it is, as there are two. Then another particular about this bow is that it is stamped on the 'mother o' pearl' plate at the screw with the name of 'T. Robinson.' This gentleman, I understand, was a celebrated violinist in Yorkshire thirty or forty years ago, and also conductor of a choral union—which one, I don't know—and no one seems to be able to enlighten me as to who he was ; and after a most careful search in biographical dictionaries, I now appeal to you, hoping you may be able to give me some idea of the value of my bow, and who this T. Robinson was." Can any of our readers give this information ?

We have received from the Programme Agency, 16, George Street, Hanover Square, W., a copy of "The Story of the Messiah," which is ably written by Mr. Eben Goold, M.A., B. Mus. The idea of this Agency is to provide a Book of Words of the chief oratorios, with copious notes and comments, intended to assist the hearer to an intelligent understanding of the works. Mr. Goold has succeeded in producing a very interesting and useful work on "The Messiah." Not only is the history of the oratorio given, but carefully prepared analytical notes and pictures are added, the price being sixpence only.

### Short Themes.

#### MUSIC AS MEDICINE.

THAT musical sounds produce a marked effect on the system is proved by physiological experiments on men and animals. The rate of the action of the heart and the force of the circulation are notably influenced in a direction depending on the pitch, intensity, and timbre of the sound. Generally speaking, the heart's action is quickened and the pressure of the blood in the arteries increased, though sometimes the converse effect is produced, those results depending, no doubt, on the idiosyncrasy of the individual. Powerful results are produced on the nervous system, sometimes stimulant, sometimes sedative. Music is thus clearly seen to be potent in medicine, and there seems to be no reason why its effects should not be studied like that of any drug.—*Chambers' Journal*.

\* \* \*

#### ORIGIN OF NURSERY RHYMES.

"THREE Blind Mice" is a music book of 1609.

"A Froggie Would A-wooing Go" was licensed in 1650.

"Little Jack Horner" is older than the seventeenth century.

"Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat, Where Have You Been?" dates from the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

"Boys and Girls Come Out to Play" dates from Charles II., as does also "Lucy Locket Lost Her Pocket."

"Old Mother Hubbard," "Goosey, Goosey Gander," and "Old Mother Goose" apparently date back to the sixteenth century.

"Cinderella," "Jack the Giant Killer," "Blue Beard," and "Tom Thumb" were given to the world in Paris in 1697. The author was Charles Perrault.

"Humpty-Dumpty" was a bold, bad baron, who lived in the days of King John, and was tumbled from power. His history was put up into a riddle, the meaning of which is an egg.

"The Babes in the Woods" was founded on an actual crime committed in Norfolk, near Wayland Wood, in the fifteenth century. An old house in the neighbourhood is still pointed out upon a mantelpiece in which is carved the entire history.

#### TRAINING THE VOICE.

NATURE seldom moves by jumps, and a student who reaches the best use of his voice learns that he must do that through natural laws. In other words he must acquire all things through naturalness. What wrongs have been done to students under the shield of so-called naturalness ! Many teachers who claim that they are cultivating the voice by natural laws, know nothing of what it means to be natural. Naturalness means the expression of our own nature. If a teacher uses the natural method he but points out to his pupils their true natures, and holds them to that correct use of such that they return to their normal condition. The necessities of our modern living have made most of us feel that we must put a side of ourselves outward which shows off well. In singing we develop abnormally something which we fancy will please our hearers, and bring us applause. We try to hide our defects, and admit that we do. Aside from the question of honesty, it is policy to do so ? Most firmly should be the answer, No ! It destroys the naturalness of the singer and substitutes artifice. Any spurious issue will be detected sooner or later. Besides is it not much more comfortable to have the real than the counterfeit ? Be natural, then. Many students are impulsive. It was to these that the remark that "Nature seldom jumps" was made. In natural action everything is deliberate and restful, controlled and sure. Nature makes but few angles, but moves in graceful curves. Good quality of tone on one note and poor quality on the next is not natural. Nature does not jump from one voice into another. Nature demands symmetric cultivation of the whole voice, and not display of a favoured part.

Do not be content to merely make progress. Merely making progress means that to reach great results a long time must elapse. To make a great artist requires years of musical and intellectual training ; to be able to sing as perfectly as the body is capable of acting requires but a few weeks, or, at most, a few months.—*The Vocalist*.

JAN., 1895.]

## THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

5

## CAUSE AND EFFECT IN TONE.

FROM every musical instrument we may produce either a fine or a bad tone, according as we play it. The same violin, for instance, which is so delightful in the hands of a clever player, will sound most disagreeably when used by one who does not know how to play. It is the same with the pianoforte. If it is not properly played, or if we merely thump and bang the keys, the best instrument will sound hard and unpleasant. So, also, if we employ too little force, or do not know how to use this power in a proper manner, the tone will be poor and dull, and the performance unintelligible, and without soul or expression.

The interior mechanism of this instrument is such that the strings will only sound well when, in the first place, we strike each key perpendicularly; that is, straight downwards, and exactly in the middle; and therefore not sideways or obliquely. Second, when after the percussion, each key is so firmly pressed down as to cause the full tone of the instrument to be audible. Third, when before the percussion, we do not raise the finger too high; as, in that case, with the tone, there will be heard the blow on the key. Fourth, when the hand and arm, even when striking with considerable force, do not make any jumping, chopping, or oscillating movement; for it will be found that the fingers cannot play pleasantly and tranquilly when the hands and arms are unsteady. Fifth, when the player observes all these directions, in rapid runs, or even in skips and extensions, as strictly as in slow and quiet passages.

From week to week increase the degree of rapidity, till at last all the fingers are in a condition to fly over the keys with lightness, firmness, and distinct and beautiful execution. Every day when you seat yourself at the pianoforte, let the scales for one half-hour be the first thing which you attack, as by this means the fingers will be got in readiness for everything else.

## Minatures.

## BECKENHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

BECKENHAM can boast of having one of the most handsome Congregational Churches in the South of London. It has been built a few years only. It is complete in every respect, well-finished, and is altogether a comfortable building. The only fault that can be found with it is that it is too lofty, the result being an echo, which must be as trying to the minister as it is to the congregation. The Rev. T. Sissons is the much beloved pastor, and as an eloquent and earnest preacher, he is well known far beyond his own Church.

The music is under the care of Mr. E. A. Coombs who presides at the organ with much skill and excellent taste. As a solo player he has great executive ability, and as an accompanist he is very sympathetic. His instrument was formerly in the Weigh House Chapel, but was enlarged on its removal to Beckenham. A third manual has still to be added to complete the specification.

The choir is composed of ladies, gentlemen, and boys, and they are well trained. For promptness and

brightness, we have rarely heard a better choir. Expression is also a strong point. There is, it seems to us, a tendency to sing rather too fast occasionally. For instance in a S.M. hymn, each verse took fourteen seconds only. The congregation appear to do more listening than singing. They might join more heartily in the hymns and chants with advantage.

The service is much of the ordinary kind, except that the choir frequently sing anthems not found in the Congregational Church Hymnal. Tours' Magnificat in F was given on the occasion of our visit. Choral "Amens" are used. On special occasions the choir is augmented, when the musical service is of an elaborate and interesting character.

We were glad to observe that the choir entered the church from the vestry, and took their seats at one time—an example we should like to see followed in all churches.

## RYDE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

RYDE Congregational Church is a conspicuous object, for, situated on the hill rising from the shore, its graceful spire can be seen a long way off. Gothic in design and well-proportioned it is a distinct ornament to the town. It will seat about nine hundred people. The present minister is the Rev. C. James. On taking the pastorate about two years ago, he found the cause in a low state. Many of the young people had wandered away, and the congregation was poor. Like a wise man, Mr. James saw the necessity for making radical changes. The young people must be considered, and the services brightened, and otherwise altered to meet present-day wants. He was not afraid to take from other churches that which is helpful: Collects, the General Thanksgiving, and the Confession are said; responsive prayers (Dr. Hunter's, we believe) are used; "Amen" is sung after the prayers and hymns, and after the Benediction a Vesper Hymn or Sevenfold Amen is sung. These innovations at once gave more interest and life to the services, and together with Mr. James' earnest pulpit ministrations immediately began to attract larger congregations. What is the result? In less than two years the almost empty church is completely filled, and often on Sunday evenings chairs have to be placed in the aisles. Would that all our old-fashioned deacons and ministers could visit Ryde and take a lesson! We have it on Mr. James' authority that some ministers visiting his church have greatly appreciated the service, and expressed a wish that they could introduce it at their own churches, but added that they "dare not." We should strongly advise them to try it, and we believe in three months afterwards there would be very little if any opposition to it.

Happily Mr. James has an efficient choir, and they carry out the musical service in a very creditable manner. The organ, a good two-manual instrument by Forster and Andrews, is well played by Mr. Earl, Mr. Bennett being the choir-master.

We offer our hearty congratulations to Mr. James and his people on the flourishing state of the cause at Ryde. Long may it continue, and may their spirit and good common sense spread to all our sleepy churches.



### Music at Highbury Congregational Chapel, Bristol.

THERE are many interesting features connected with this place of worship, of far more than local fame, which establish it as one of the foremost and most influential Congregational churches in the British Isles.

The sanctuary stands on a spot which, during the reign of Queen Mary, was sanctified by the blood of several martyrs who, for the avowal of their Christian faith, were burned to death. Approaching the edifice one almost imagines it to be a comfortable olden time Episcopal church : certainly it is quite a departure from the usual Nonconformist pattern. The style of architecture is Fifteenth Century Gothic, with square tower, the mantling of ivy giving it an even more picturesque and antiquated appearance, and many people express astonishment when, on seeing it for the first time, they are told that it is but just over fifty years old. The jubilee of the church was celebrated last year, when several important alterations were made. The apse was lengthened, and an organ chamber built on one side of it ; at the same time the organ was greatly enlarged and improved. On entering the building one is struck with the distinctly high order of the place. It is by no means a large church, only seating about 800 persons, but there is a class and quality about the structure which stamps it at once as belonging to an aristocratic congregation.

If there is one thing more than another which has made this church famous, it is surely the princely collections made on behalf of the London Missionary Society, which on a recent Sunday

amounted to no less than nine hundred pounds, and this magnificent offertory was small compared with some previous years, when the amount has often reached considerably over a thousand pounds. It will readily be understood, therefore, that the congregation is mainly composed of the "upper ten" of Bristol "Noncons."

The success of the cause is very largely attributable to the ministry of the Rev. David Thomas, its first pastor, who for nearly thirty years was one of the leading spiritual teachers in this ancient western metropolis. After his death, in 1875, the good work was taken up by his son, the Rev. Arnold Thomas, M.A., who is the present minister, and it may be said that from that time to this, pastor and people have been united in purpose, endeavouring to do all possible good, quietly and unobtrusively, without fuss or parade.

Under the direction of Mr. Thomas (who was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduated B.A. in 1871, M.A. in 1874, and is also an M.A. of the London University) the work of the church has flourished exceedingly, and the zeal, liberality, and self-denying labours of the people during the last fifty years constitute one of the most pleasant chapters in local Nonconformist history.

There are many handsome stained glass memorial windows in the church which, together with the oaken roof, cause quite a "dim religious light" to pervade the place. The back of the apse, too, is surrounded with handsomely carved oak, the somewhat sombre effect of which is very tastefully relieved by some elaborate vases of black iron and brass, in which are placed very choice flowers ; on either side of the apse (or chancel) are to be found the choir benches, which accommodate about twenty singers. The appearance of the organ on the north side is one of far more than usual elegance. The case was designed by a local architect, and harmonises very tastefully with the general details of the building, the effect of the ornamental wrought iron-work in front of the delicately tinted organ pipes, presenting an extremely artistic and refined appearance. The instrument is one of Willis's latest, and is complete in every variety of tone necessary for church work. The flue stops are fine and full toned, and the reeds rich and rosy. It is voiced to suit the church, the full organ being not too loud or harsh, and yet each delicate-toned stop travels with the utmost clearness down the church. It is altogether an admirable instrument, and we have much pleasure in giving its full specification, which will be found in another column.

Coming now to the subject of our portrait, Mr. Arthur N. Price, L.R.A.M., the organist and choirmaster, we have to speak of him in terms of cordial and well-deserved approval. For ten years Mr. Price occupied the position of organist at the Cotham Wesleyan Chapel, previous to his taking his present appointment some three years ago. Illustrative of his great enthusiasm and ardent love of his organ, we may mention that he is often to be found at the church as early as 6.30 a.m. "fondling" the keyboard. He is a man of great musical taste, uses just the right tone colours in

accompanying throughout, never obtrusive, but "nursing" the voices if necessary, and is so thoroughly reliable and free from "tricks," that the congregation feel they can sing with perfect safety, and not get "left." His *technique* is clear and precise, and whether solo playing or accompanying, a listener feels that there is a sympathetic and cultured musician, thoroughly capable for the duty required of him and whose work is of the best possible quality for church purposes.

The choir is quite a small one, the total number at present being nineteen, and made up thus:—seven sopranos, four altos, three tenors and five basses. Monthly lists of the music to be sung are provided for the congregation, so that everyone may come prepared to join heartily in the services. This is, of course, a good idea, and we sincerely trust that the congregation make good use of such an advantage. So much can be done in this way to sympathise with the choir in their efforts to secure really good congregational singing.

The hymn-book in use is the Congregational Church Hymnal (with Chants and Anthems), and the Bristol-Tune-book occasionally.

We were present at both services on Sunday, September 23rd last. At the morning service the

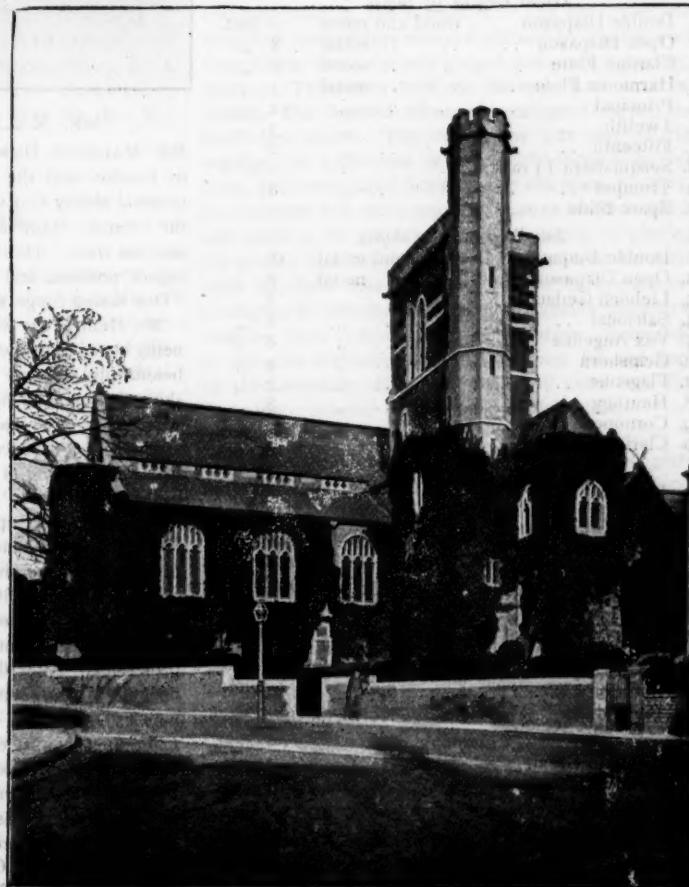
Mr. Price gave as

to perform. Two other well known hymns were included in the service, and were sung with considerable unction.

Mr. Thomas's sermon on "Redemption" was a quiet and easy pastoral talk to his people. There was no oratorical display whatever, but just the thoughtful discourse of a minister deeply anxious for the spiritual well-being of the souls under his care.

As a concluding voluntary Mr. Price gave the allegro from a Sonata by Lemmens, to which ample justice was done. It being a wet morning many were compelled to wait a while after the service, when Mr. Price did his best to counteract the dreary effect of the heavy rainfall by giving us a very masterly rendering of one of Bach's fugues, in which his beautiful instrument was heard to the best advantage.

The attendance at the evening service was very small, partly owing to the weather no doubt. But it led us to think that a good musical service occasionally on Sunday evenings might have the effect of improving the congregations. Such action as this has "taken" at many places with distinct benefit. With such a fine organ, and such a highly efficient organist and choir, the possibilities in this direction are great. Why not throw the church open on Sunday afternoons, or one evening during the week,



for the performance of such music as would surely be helpful and inspiring to many weary lives? It always seems to us a very great pity that opportunities of this kind are lost sight of by many such influential churches as this, and we hopefully trust that the time is near at hand when our churches shall be first in the field in providing good music for the people instead of maintaining such utter indifference to the fact that most of our grand organs and churches remain idle all the week, while music-halls are ever on the alert. We know it to be the case that in many churches such as Highbury Chapel, Bristol, there exists plenty of willing musicians and helpers who are only too eager to work in this Christian way, and we feel sure that with the cordial co-operation of their respective ministers and church officers a revolution may soon be brought about which will gladly be welcomed by many thousands of our fellow creatures who never enter a place of worship.

### Nonconformist Church Organs.

Highbury Congregational Church,  
BRISTOL.

Built by Messrs. Willis and Sons.

*Great Organ (9 stops).*

1. Double Diapason	wood and metal	16	feet.
2. Open Diapason	.. .. metal	8	"
3. Claribel Flute	.. .. wood	8	"
4. Harmonic Flute	.. .. metal	4	"
5. Principal	.. .. "	4	"
6. Twelfth	.. .. "	3	"
7. Fifteenth	.. .. "	2	"
8. Sesquialtera (3 ranks)	.. .. "		
9. Trumpet	.. .. "	8	"
10. Spare Slide	.. .. "		

*Swell Organ (10 stops).*

11. Double Diapason	wood and metal	16	"
12. Open Diapason	.. .. metal	8	"
13. Lieblich Gedact	.. .. "	8	"
14. Salicional	.. .. "	8	"
15. Vox Angelica	.. .. "	8	"
16. Gemshorn	.. .. "	4	"
17. Flageolet	.. .. "	2	"
18. Hautboy	.. .. "	8	"
19. Cornopean	.. .. "	8	"
20. Clarion	.. .. "	4	"

*Choir Organ (6 stops).*

21. Dulciana	.. .. metal	8	"
22. Gamba	.. .. "	8	"
23. Claribel Flute	.. .. wood	8	"
24. Harmonic Flute	.. .. metal	4	"
25. Piccolo	.. .. "	2	"
26. Corno-di-Bassetto	.. .. "	8	"

*Pedal (3 stops).*

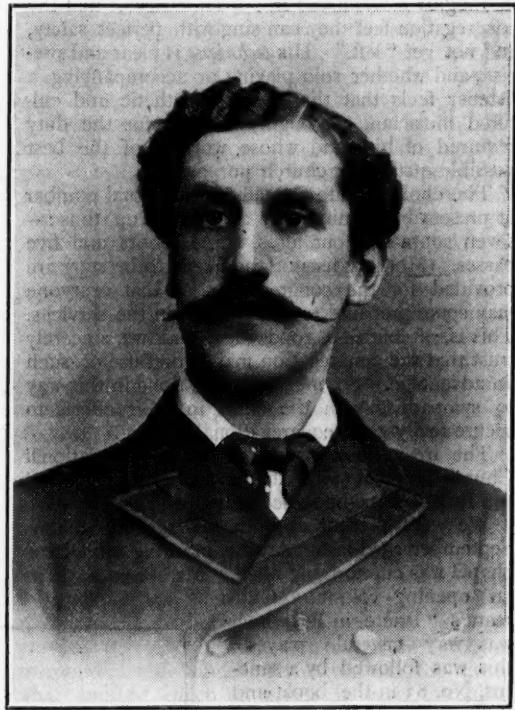
27. Open Diapason	.. .. wood	16	"
28. Bourdon	.. .. "	16	"
29. Violoncello	.. .. metal	8	"

*Couplers.*

30. Swell to Great.	33. Great to Pedals.
31. Swell to Choir.	34. Choir to Pedals.
32. Swell to Pedals.	

Four Composition Pedals to Great Organ.  
Three Composition Pedals to Swell Organ.  
One double acting Great to Pedal Coupler.

### Our Rising Singers.



MR. MALDWYN HUMPHREYS.

MR. MALDWYN HUMPHREYS is already so well known in London and the provinces as a tenor vocalist of unusual ability that we may almost say he has passed the "rising" stage in the usual acceptation of the term, and has risen. He is, however, daily "rising" into a higher position, and so may claim a notice amongst "Our Rising Singers."

Mr. Humphreys was born in Machynlleth, his father being engaged in the leather trade in that sleepy, but beautifully situated town. At a very early age he showed promising signs of vocal ability. He remembers when only five years old being placed on a chair to sing a solo at a concert, and very shortly afterwards he began to compete in local Eisteddfods. After his voice broke, he entered competitions in more important Eisteddfods, and upon one of these occasions Mr. Henry Leslie was the adjudicator, who, in awarding the prize to Mr. Humphreys, spoke in high terms of his singing. This resulted in Mr. Leslie carefully testing the voice of the young vocalist, and so pleased and satisfied was he that he advised him to go in for the profession. After due consideration, Mr. Humphreys decided to study with Mr. W. H. Cummings for three months as a trial. This proved satisfactory, and Mr. Cummings confirmed Mr. Leslie's opinion as to Mr. Humphreys' prospects.

The Royal Academy of Music (of which he is now an Associate) was the institution to which Mr. Humphreys went, and he took with him a letter from Mr. Leslie to Sir George Macfarren, asking that he might be placed under that eminent teacher, Mr. Ran-

degger. This was a matter of difficulty, owing to Mr. Randecker being already so full of pupils. On hearing Mr. Humphreys, however, he at once consented to take him, and the young tenor now feels that that was a lucky day in his career, for he says that in Mr. Randecker he found not only a most careful and capable teacher, but his "best friend in the world," for no one has put more in his way. For five years teacher and student worked together, with most happy and satisfactory results.

Mr. Humphreys has taken more prizes at the Royal Academy than any other tenor has ever done. The Bronze Medal, Silver Medal, Certificate of Merit, the Evill prize, the Joseph Maas Memorial prize, and the Gold Medal have all been his. For the Evill prize he had (owing to the death of his father) to prepare the test pieces in four days, while the other competitors had been working for many weeks. He, however, came out winner, and Mr. Santley (who, with Mr. Vernon Rigby, adjudicated) said he promised to be the greatest singer Wales ever produced—a very high compliment, especially from so qualified a judge.

Mr. Humphreys has sung at the Norwich Festival, at the Crystal Palace in two concerts given on the Handel Festival scale, at a Bristol Festival intermediate concert, at the Albert Hall and St. James's Hall Ballad Concerts, at Covent Garden Oratorio Concerts, and in most of the large provincial towns. He is equally at home either in Oratorios or Ballads. As a very capable and refined vocalist, and as a good, worthy fellow, he is much esteemed by those who know him. As a teacher (he holds a certificate for teaching from the R.A.M.) he is thoroughly reliable.

### Passing Notes.

MR. FREDERIC ARCHER, the eminent organist, now in America, has been discoursing on the question of nervousness in the public player. Mr. Archer declares that his "dear old friend," Charles Gounod, was the most nervous of men, and positively dreaded the ordeal of directing the performance of one of his own works. Nervousness, he further asserts, is a natural characteristic of the artistic temperament, for the most part inseparable from the utterances of genius. Increased familiarity with the public tends to lessen it, but in many cases it is never overcome, and there have been great players who had to give up the platform altogether because of the embarrassing feeling. With many executants, of course, it is only the first item in the programme that suffers. As soon as this has been got over satisfactorily, the player loses all sense of personality and surroundings; the presence of an audience is forgotten, and the mind is wholly concentrated on the work in hand. I agree with Mr. Archer, however, in thinking that a total want of nervous sensibility is apt to degenerate into over-confidence, and then we probably get a stolid, phlegmatic performance, unilluminated by even a glimpse of any intellectual appreciation of the composer's thoughts and intentions. I would suggest the cultivation of the absence of nervousness—a passive quality—as preferable to the

actual presence of confidence, an active force for public performances. One musician, I see, suggests that you may keep your nerves strong by cold water plunges, summer and winter! But the artistic temperament is not always heroic.

It appears that Eugene Raab, royal harper in Munich, has reformed his instrument. He has given it a more pleasing shape; he has enlarged and enriched the beauty of its tone. There is now a "more intimate association of melody with accompaniment"; there is greater musical effect. The intimation has set Mr. Philip Hale, of Boston, wondering why maidens do not take to the harp rather than to the piano. For the piano, according to Philip, is a foe to matrimony, while the harp positively invites the bashful lover to declare his passion! Unfortunately, music is not now the handmaid of Venus, as she once was. In olden times women learned to play upon instruments for private use, not for public display. Richard Burton, for example, speaks of "a part of a gentlewoman's bringing up—to sing, dance, and play on the lute or some such instrument before she can say her paternoster or ten commandments. 'Tis the best way, their parents think, to get them husbands; they are compelled to learn; 'tis a great allurement as it is often used, and many are undone by it." And no doubt there is something of truth in the statement. The harp, the lute, nearly all instruments that are plucked by fingers, even though they were slovenly played, enhanced a woman's charms. They were held for the most part near her breast. She fondled them, she caressed them; she faced her hearer. The instrument was part of the woman; its gentleness wooed confidences, dispelled fears, and encouraged hopes. But the piano? Well, the prettiest and most engaging woman in the world is not made a bit prettier or more engaging by playing the piano; and on the whole I am inclined to agree with Mr. Hale that the harp should have more encouragement from parents with marriageable daughters. Besides, there is another recommendation. According to orthodox authority there will be a use for the harp in the hereafter; the piano does not enter into the apocalyptic scheme of the music of the future.

The *Musical Courier*, discussing the encore, suggests in my opinion, the only real remedy for the abatement of this tyrannical nuisance. No one objects to a spontaneous and general demand for an encore; but how often does such a thing occur? The history of the average encore is this: a soloist finishes a piece, and is heartily applauded; the great body of the audience ceases to applaud, and then some dozen or more encore fiends keep on clapping their hands and stamping, not because they really hunger for more music but because they are built that way. Fifteen or twenty of those weaker brethren who are always ready to follow a leader join in the clatter; and the soloist, intent on getting a line in the next morning's papers, promptly comes forward with another selection. The result is that perhaps over a thousand persons who may not seriously object to hearing the soloist again, but certainly did not ask to, are compelled to do so by a

noisy minority of less than a hundred. It is a case of utterly iniquitous minority rule. The correction of the abuse ought, of course, to lie with the artists themselves. But the artists do not correct it; they foster it. Therefore, let the newspapers step in. Let every journal in the land cease to mention encores at concerts. It is the custom now to tell the name—or at any rate to try to—of the composition given in response to an encore. This ought to be stopped at once. The papers should not even mention the fact that there was an encore. I am persuaded that a concerted and sustained process of this kind would in time reduce the number of encores to those actually insisted upon by the entire audience. And to such encores, of course, no one objects.

According to the Toronto *Saturday Night*, Mr. Moody, the well-known evangelist, has been delivering himself on the subject of music as he understands—or rather misunderstands—it. He says it is a false idea that people want high-toned classical music. Ordinary people want "the other kind." They do not know where much of this "classical stuff" comes from or where it goes to, and they do not care. Mr. Moody should perhaps not be taken too seriously; but his remarks suggest a few thoughts regarding the insipid jingles which he associates with his own earnest evangelistic work. The fate of these ephemeral creations it is not difficult to foresee. They will go the way of their kind and pass into oblivion after a brief and very harmless existence. All grand old classical hymns and hymn-tunes have weathered the storm for generations, and will still serve as beacon lights for seekers after the true and the good when these doggerel rhythms and effeminate ditties have been buried in a well-deserved oblivion. The ear-tickling "Gospel hymn" may do for a time of momentary religious excitement, but the nobler hymns and tunes of our classical writers are for *all* time. The Toronto journal already mentioned says that Mr. Moody's conception of music would not prove much of an inspiration to many of us to strive for the better land did we feel that the vulgar claptrap which he praises, and not the music of Palestrina, Bach, Handel, and others of the great and glorious masters, would prove an index of that wonderful service of praise we all hope to participate in there. Happily the Seer of Patmos heard nothing of "Hold the fort" or "The sweet by-and-by," when he was in the spirit on the Lord's Day.

What is your notion of the most fitting circumstances and surroundings for the proper appreciation of music? I ask because the suggestion has been made that for this proper appreciation a man should kneel in the dusk of a cathedral on a red velvet cushion before a stained-glass window, with the vague pleasurable consciousness that his nearest and dearest friends are somewhere in the dusk of the same cathedral—all on red velvet cushions before stained-glass windows. It sounds very nice; but for my own part, I should be tempted to echo the petition of Skelton to Cardinal Wolsey: "I pray your grace to let me lye doune and

wallow, for I can kneele no longer." After all, the question of environment must give way to the question of music. You might have all the circumstances for a proper appreciation, and have nothing proper to appreciate.

Mr. F. G. Edwards is at his jokes again. Here is his latest riddle, "composed," he tells us, by a Nonconformist organist [Query F. G. E.] during his summer holiday. Q.—What is the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful candidate for the Associateship of the Royal College of Organists? Ans.—One is *arco* (A.R.C.O.), the other is *pizzicato* (plucked). I suggest to this Nonconformist organist that on his next holiday he should compose a Peruvian bark-arréole. It should begin and end with the *tonic*.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

## Expression in Psalmody.

BY GEORGE H. ELY, B.A.

To the incapable, the careless, or the superficial organist, the word expression simply denotes the alternation of loud Great with soft Choir, or of Full Swell with the fancy stops. There is no method in this madness, save indeed that amount of method evinced in glancing at certain prominent words in the verses of hymn or psalm, and making them the basis, often utterly illogical, of the tone-colouring. "Death" and "peace" argue the Voix Célestes; "joy" and "glory" require Great to 15th; "tempest" and "torrent" call for nothing but two adjacent notes on the pedal Open Diapason; "birds" are prefigured by a trill upon the piccolo. As to the choir, a general instruction to "follow the organ" is considered quite sufficient. It must have been their unhappy experience of "expression" under such individuals that suggested the marginal glosses which the editors of our hymn-books have presented us with.

Now it needs no demonstration that expression in its true connotation means something very different from this. Expression is to singing what scent is to flowers, what bouquet is to wine. Without it, singing is spiritless, mechanical, deadening, doubly useless. Particularly in psalmody is expression essential, for in their worship-music our congregations are supposed to give utterance to their own individual emotions. No "following the organ," mechanically handled, or even well-handled, will ever encourage this genuine and spontaneous song of praise.

It is my deliberate conviction that the use of expression marks in our hymnals actually tends in the opposite direction, namely, to encourage mechanical and thoughtless singing. In the first place, since the only marks used are those indicating degrees of tone-intensity, they tend to reduce all expression to a mere difference of soft and loud, whereas it is clear that phrasing, emphasis, and pace are equally important. Secondly, all responsibility is removed from organist, choir, and congregation alike; if they follow the marking they cannot go wrong; they are directly encouraged to accept another person's notion of how certain senti-

ments should be expressed, and need not bestow another moment's attention on the matter. The sacrifice of private judgment to authority is involved.

Clever and estimable as our editors of hymnals usually are, they would hesitate, especially if they are Nonconformists, to claim infallibility or absolute perfection for their judgments. If their expression marks are meant as suggestions, which may be disregarded at discretion, one cannot quarrel with them. But if on the contrary they are to be considered as deliberate instructions to choirs and congregations, it is my contention that they are not justified on any ground.

I do not propose to deal in this paper with emphasis, phrasing, and such other constituents of expression. I wish to take expression in the sense in which our editors take it, as the alternation of soft and loud, and in a few instances of well-known hymns to examine their instructions, and see what claim they have to universal authority. It will be interesting and instructive in some cases to compare the work of rival editors.

Obviously, some hymns or verses of hymns demand loud singing, such as "O worship the king," "Praise, my soul, the King of heaven." Others just as obviously are of a quieter, more contemplative character and require softer treatment, such as "Hark, my soul," and "Our blest Redeemer." Not even an editor could go astray in such cases. But it is not so easy in other cases to decide whether *f* or *p* should be the mark. Take a hymn like "Fierce raged the tempest" (C.C.H. 118; Hymns A. and M. 285). Here we find the most ridiculous divergence of opinion between the editors of two of our most popular hymnals—books, mark, which are authoritative in their several spheres. The first phrase of the third stanza, "The wild winds hush'd," is marked in C.C.H. *mf*, in H. A. and M. *pp*; the latter adds *f* at "The angry deep," *dim* for the next two lines, and *cr* for the words "At Thy will." C.C.H. puts *dim* at the second line, *p* at the third, and *f* at the fourth. This is what I call telescopic expression. And what is the explanation of this peculiar phenomenon? Simply that the several editors have attempted a little "word-painting," and, like all artists, have looked at the matter with their own individual eyes, and seen differently. But the radical fault of both, a fault indeed which runs through most of such editing, is attention to the separate *words* rather than the general *sense*. "The angry deep" was loud enough, no doubt; but the sentence here is the "angry deep sank to sleep," and the sentence is meaningless until we reach the word "sank." If it be contended that we are entitled to give tone-colour to the separate words as they occur, then in the case of the figure of speech called *oxymoron*, where two words expressing contrasted notions are placed in collocation, we might have a sudden *f* and a sudden *p*; which, as Euclid says, is absurd. I once heard a choir—a prize choir—sing "And give for wild confusion peace" in that way—tempestuously loud up to the word "confusion," and then a sudden *pianissimo* at "peace." It was ludicrously suggestive of a heady hunter leaping at a stiff hedge, and being brought to involuntary quiescence in a ditch on the farther side.

Take another case, "Hark, my soul, it is the Lord." The first line of the fifth stanza, "Thou shalt see my glory soon," is marked *f* in both the editions referred to. For the second line C.C.H. gives *p* (telescopic again), H. A. and M. gives *mf*. I take it that this softening down is due to the word "grace," but surely it will be no less a matter of jubilation "when the work of grace is done," than when the heavenly glory is seen—simply because the events will be coincident. But no; "glory," in the lexicon of expression, is marked *f*, and "grace" *p*, and nothing else matters.

Again, take that favourite hymn, "It came upon the midnight clear" (C.C.H. 93). The first two lines are marked *mf*, but the third line, "From angels bending near the earth," is strangely enough marked *dim*. Why? I cannot even imagine an answer. It cannot be an attempt at realism, for as the angels bent nearer the earth their song would swell louder. It cannot be that "bend," being associated sometimes with the act of prayer, has got a *p* immutably fixed to it in that aforesaid lexicon! I say it cannot be, for when we come to the words

"When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendours fling,"

the editors have rightly enough disregarded the temptation of the word "peace," and have given *f* as the appropriate mark of expression.

These examples are not selected. They are taken at random from a note-book well stocked with similar examples, some of which I disagree with, some I merely cannot understand. But the few I have given are sufficient to show that even with the best of editors expression marks are not altogether unexceptionable.

In my opinion, expression will never be satisfactorily attended to until the minister and the organist are more nearly on an equality in attainments and salary. Not that judgment in this matter depends entirely on religious sentiment. As a matter of fact, in many cases it is merely a matter of literary appreciation, and the salaries paid are too small to encourage a liberal education among organists. A short time ago I was conducting the practice of a strange choir. We were rehearsing the grandly poetical 104th Psalm, and came to the verse, "He looketh on the earth and it trembleth; He toucheth the hills and they smoke." The choir, taking trembling I suppose as a sign of fear, sang the verse softly. They had been accustomed to "follow the organ." I pointed out to them that they could hardly be right, because, for one thing, the context is so unmistakably jubilant. Further, there can be no doubt that the Psalmist is simply accounting in a poetical way for earthquakes and volcanoes, as a manifestation of the Creator's omnipotence, and, as I told that choir, such natural phenomena are not usually quiet in their occurrence. The explanation, it will be seen, was merely a literary one, and it is from a literary standpoint that a word may be said for the abhorred amateur organist.

SIR JOSEPH BARNBY has been seriously ill, but is now happily recovering. He hopes shortly to resume his usual work.

## Worship Music in America.

It is remarkable to the musical observer to note that although the American has reached out in the direction of progress in many ways, and applied practical methods so as to obtain the largest possible amount of good out of everything he touches, he yet lags behind a long way in the matter of home-made church music, most conspicuously in the composition of hymn tunes. Music has by no means advanced in the same ratio as commerce in the States. It appears as if the American is essentially a business man. He understands the science of dollars and cents better than music making or picture painting.

An American artist told an interviewer lately that he was forced to live in Italy to make his pictures sell in the States, and, whereas a picture which fetched thousands of dollars imported from Italy, would not sell for as many cents if painted in his own land. Americans patronise art as a sort of side show, for amusement, and a relief to the monotony of dollar getting. "Boodle" is the Yankee criterion of everything, and unless there is "Boodle" in it, he doesn't want to touch it. That is why they do not improve their hymn tunes.

A minister remarked one day to the chief deacon on the singular inattention of the congregation to his discourse, and was met with the characteristic reply, "But, sir, do you know that you were preaching to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars?" The social standard of a church is often gauged by the amount they pay the quartette.

Ministers and deacons take great pains to provide good wholesome entertainments of mental and physical recreation for their young people, so much so that the "Lecture and Entertainment Course," providing amusement for one evening in the week is part of the church organisation in most cities. Is it not astonishing, therefore, that they should neglect to educate their young people to an appreciation of good hymn tunes and church music, and thus foster among them a taste for higher methods of church praise?

But, as a matter of fact, there seems to be no care given to the subject among congregations as a rule; the consequence is, the best interests of psalmody have suffered from the popular use of hymn tunes which have been more attractive to the ear—for the moment only perhaps—than appropriate to the sacred office of praise, or dignity of God's house.

It is true that at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, the congregation are invited to a week-evening singing class for the study of psalmody, but the hymnal in use until lately was so old and poor that there was little to attract towards study from a musical point of view. Now that they have a new hymnal, things are better, and Plymouth Church is an exception in this matter, and promises much for the future—with a large choir under the musical direction of one of the editors of their new book—Professor Charles Smith, the able organist.

"But," someone will remark, "was there not congregational singing at Dr. Talmage's Church?"

Yes, of a kind, but it was of a very limited character,

and like that of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, confined to about six tunes. Each service at the Brooklyn Tabernacle opened by the congregation singing the "Doxology" to the "Old Hundredth." This was sung very heartily, as would be also two well-known and *well-worn* hymns later on in the service, chiefly in unison led by a cornet and accompanied by full organ, with perhaps an improvised bass here and there, each man choosing his own interval, on the "go as you please" principle. Very different is it from the robust part-singing one hears at Dr. Allon's or other churches, where the worship is led by a choir of mixed voices singing in parts, and where nearly every member of the congregation, provided with hymn and tune, contributes his quota to the harmonic mass of praise. Of course it is grand to hear a congregation of 4,000 persons sing the "Doxology," "Rock of Ages," or "Nearer, my God, to Thee." But our fathers did that a century back, with the barrel organ, containing six tunes, in the parish church. Surely an intelligent congregation on the eve of the twentieth century is capable of a higher standard of musical worship than that!

There is very little real congregational singing—as we understand it—in America. One of the reasons of this is a musical indolence consequent upon growing rich.

The wealthy "Yankee" demands that his singing shall be done for him as well as his praying.

Large sums are spent on the music of the Church, and a quartette stuck up to sing for, and to, the people.

This quartette choose to sing anything but hymns. They must sing something having a solo for each voice, or there is jealousy. Thus it is that the congregational hymn tune suffers again.

Not that the quartette cannot have its place, say during the offertory, or some other appropriate part of the service, when a suitable anthem is capable of inspiring the most worshipful feeling, especially if due attention is paid by the singers to the perfect pronunciation of the words, and by observing a devotional demeanour in rendition, but *not to the total exclusion* of congregational song worship, as is the case generally in American churches.

The Methodist idea is that church music is good in proportion to the number of persons taking part in the praise.

In a great measure this is correct. Of course a volume of sound is not all that is necessary to make church praise. There may be noise without music, but in these days of educational progress, in which America is by no means behind, there is very little fear of the unmusical voices over-balancing the well-trained ones, if the latter will only take the trouble to make an effort in the direction of hymn tune singing.

Our old psalmody class system, meeting once a week, to which the congregation used to be invited, might be introduced on the other side of the Atlantic with advantage, under the proper superintendence of a musician in sympathy with the improvement of congregational church praise.

Perhaps the best way to begin any reform would be through the Sunday-school, for the Sunday-school

hymn tunes in America are even more frivolous than the ordinary hymnal tunes, and if the young are taught this feeble stuff it is certain that the congregational singing of the future will suffer.

The music of the Sunday-school should be an educational force conveying lessons which are noble and dignified. It may be bright and melodious without being necessarily flippant and silly. A washed-out imitation of an operatic air, emasculated and divested of its character to fit a favourite hymn, of that musical barbarian the adapter, is happily an abomination less frequently met with in England than in America.

American home-made hymn tunes cannot by any power of imagination be compared either in point of melody or harmonic construction with the modern European productions of Gounod, Sullivan, Barnby, Goss, Wesley, Monk, and last, but not least, that prince of hymn tune writers, Dr. Dykes.

The melody seems to partake of the negro music order. For melodic variety, we get, instead, a repetition of notes to the same accompanying parts. A minimum of harmonic change, oscillating between the tonic and dominant chords, often without the use even of their inversions. These tunes progress in a jerky manner, from the fact that the short notes are placed at the commencement of the bar, thus making quite a commonplace *motive* appear original from its awkward and irregular rhythm. Looking at them one wonders if the spasmodic nature of the American, who will rush into a dining-room and bolt the whole of his dinner while a European is getting through his soup, doesn't enter into his hymn tune making.

These feeble American productions show out in strong contrast with the harmonies, graceful modulations, and delicate phrasing of the beautiful hymn-settings of Barnby and Sullivan. *Apropos* of Sir Arthur, while looking through a collection of hymns and music, the writer came upon a tune claiming to be St. Gertrude, but so disguised, emasculated, aye! even murdered, as to be scarcely recognisable. He took the liberty of registering a protest on the margin of the book, expressing disgust at the ignorance which could treat a good tune in such manner. The first two lines were all that was Sullivan; the rest, both in melody and in harmony, was entirely different—not even the character of the chorus was maintained.

Adaptation of operatic tunes to fit sacred words is a favourite device with American compilers. One book has, "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah" set to the melody of the song, "In the gloaming."

In another book was found the hymn, "Come, Thou Fount of every blessing," set to a tune which, when we were boys, was sung to the words, "Hallelujah, barley sugar, sugary candy, almond rock"—a most frivolous tune. Anything more frivolous one cannot well imagine. Instances of this kind could be multiplied *ad nauseam*, illustrating the want of the devotional tone in the musical services in America, shocking to the ear of one accustomed to English worship.

Since the foregoing was written, a paragraph has appeared in the *Christian World's "Gossip on Church Music,"* by "Precentor," which has brought additional

testimony to the absence of the congregational element in American worship music, from Rev. Reuben Thomas, who has lived in the States long enough to be now considered an American.

"Precentor" learns that at Harvard Church, Brooklyn, Boston, the congregation sing anthems. This is a startling statement to the ears, or eyes, of anyone who has lived in America. But the statement goes further, and accuses the congregation of taking copies of the anthem home for study! Also of meeting once a week for congregational rehearsal! "Precentor" feels that this is rather a large order, evidently accepting it *cum grano salis*, saying, "I should like to enquire into the facts of the case."

However, the minister says no such thing; all "incorrect." He (Rev. Reuben Thomas) has written to the *Christian World* denying the soft impeachment, and repudiating on behalf of the congregation the charge of studying the anthem or of meeting once a week for practice.

He goes on to say, "It is extremely difficult to get good congregational singing in America. The paid professional quartette engaged by so many churches is professionally interested in making congregational singing so inferior as to become distasteful to musical people. Occasionally, a quartette will have in it decently devotional people, but *sometimes* it is one of the ministers greatest trials to get along smoothly with a professional quartette. The congregational singing of England, such as I have heard when preaching at Christ's Church and Dr. Allon's, is scarcely known in the United States."

Here we have Jonathan convicted out of his own mouth.

The writer, who has worshipped with the Harvard congregation more than once, can testify to the beauty and comfort of the church and the popularity of the minister—who, by the way, is sufficiently Americanised as to preach in patent leather shoes. This is not hearsay; I *saw* the shoes, for the minister graced my presence by changing while we conversed. But I regret that I cannot speak to the congregational singing, for there wasn't any to speak of. The singing was very nice, and superior to many churches in America, but it was not congregational.

A. B.

#### NORTHAMPTON NONCONFORMIST CHOIR FESTIVAL.

On Thursday the 13th ult., a Choral Festival was given in College-street Chapel under the conductorship of Mr. R. W. Strickland. The programme, which was judiciously prepared, was gone through in good style. The hymns included "Saviour, Blessed Saviour," sung to "Norfolk Park," "Hark, hark my soul," "Jesus, soft harmonious name," "The Day of praise has reached its close." The anthems were "Sing praises unto the Lord" (Cruickshank), "Like silver lamps," "The Sun shall be no more," and "O God of saints to Thee we cry," all of which were very effectively given. Mr. Ernest W. E. Blandford presided with excellent taste at the organ, and helped in no small degree to the success of the Festival. An admirable address was given by the Rev. P. H. Smith on the text "Let all the people praise Thee."

### "The Great Amen."

THE following clever parody we reprint from our bright and interesting contemporary, the *Scottish Musical Monthly* :—

[Eight elders and several members of the choir of St. George's Parish Church, Aberdeen, have resigned in consequence of a choral "Amen" having been introduced after the benediction. The most versatile member of our staff accordingly rejoices in his first poetical commission.]

Seated one day at the organ,  
I was weary and ill at ease;  
For I knew we were innovating,  
I was sure it would stir a breeze.  
I was full of the direst foreboding,  
I wished I was dreaming then,  
As I struck that chord of music—  
The first of that soft *Amen*.  
  
Through the pews of the church ran a rustle,  
A murmur of awe and woe—  
"Jehoshaphat! what is the meaning  
Of this, Mr. So-and So?"  
The elders uprose in a body;  
The choir were not all of one mind:  
The altos and trebles sang with me;  
The tenors and basses declined!  
  
Of course I demanded their reasons  
For leaving me thus in the lurch:  
"Twas conscience impelled us," they told me,  
"And zeal for the good of the church!"  
I reasoned, and so did the parson,  
But expostulation was vain;  
The elders and choirmen forsook us;  
Amazed and forlorn we remain!  
  
It may be that Death's bright angel  
Will speak in that chord again;  
It may be that only in heaven  
I shall hear that soft *Amen*.  
If thus it befalls, then the elders  
And recalcitrant choirmen, I trow,  
Must either extinguish their "conscience,"  
Or retire—to the regions below!

G.

### Correspondence.

#### MENDELSSOHN'S ORGAN PRELUDE.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. J. Cuthbert Hadden in his "Passing Notes" of last month asks if any "organist readers know of the interesting little organ prelude written by Mendelssohn for Mr. Henry E. Dibdin, of Edinburgh." It may interest him to know that the prelude was published for the first time in the *Exeter Hall*, a magazine of music, and appeared in the number for March 1868. The magazine unfortunately had a short career, but during its existence there appeared in its pages, in addition to the prelude just mentioned, views of the old music hall in Fishamble Street, Dublin, (where the Messiah was first performed), and of Bach's organ at Arnstadt; also facsimiles of Bach's handwriting, and of the first four bars of Handel's "I know that my Redeemer liveth."—Believe me, Yours faithfully,

Brixton, Dec. 1894. J. R. GRIFFITHS.

LONDON CHORAL UNION.—The *Messiah* was given in the Queen's Hall on the 18th ult. by this Union under the conductorship of Mr. J. W. Lewis, the solo vocalists being Miss Emily Davies, Miss Marion Mackenzie, Mr. Maldwyn Humphreys, and Mr. Norman Salmond, all of whom were well received. The choruses were given with much spirit. The attendance was larger than at the previous concert.

### Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

#### METROPOLITAN.

LAMBETH.—The experiment of giving three performances of Spohr's "Last Judgment" in Advent, which was made at Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, last year, was so successful as to justify the organist, Mr. Griffiths, in giving the work again this season. Renderings of the complete work were accordingly given on Monday evenings December 3rd, 10th, and 17th, and were successful in every sense. The audiences were largely increased, and the choir, more familiar with the work, were at their best. The solo parts were in the hands of capable artists, while the accompaniments were most beautifully played by Mr. F. N. Abernethy, Mus.Bac.Oxon. Mr. J. R. Griffiths conducted, and the pastor, Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., gave an address.

POPLAR.—On Wednesday evening, November 28th, an Evening Concert was given in the Lecture Hall of Trinity Congregational Church, the proceeds of which were devoted to the Church Choir Fund. The programme was a varied and interesting one, and was greatly enjoyed by the audience. Miss Adele Kuhn, who was encored for two of her songs, sang "Dan'l Darling" (Trotter), "Come Lasses and Lads," and Cowen's "Promise of Life," the last named being sung in a thoroughly artistic manner. Mr. William Allen (one of the late Mr. Emil Bencke's pupil), thoroughly deserved the encore he obtained for a splendid rendering of "The Village Blacksmith." Mr. Robert Crawford played two violin solos, for which he received enthusiastic encores. The programme included a fine "Concertante Duet for Piano and Harmonium (Prout Op. 62), which was played by Miss Clara Hattersley (Piano), and Mr. Arthur Bayliss. Messrs. John Burchell, Charles Veness and A. Sutton, sang trios in an excellent manner. Choruses and Part Songs were included by the Church Choir, the best efforts being "Youth and Love" (Van Bree) and "Forth to the meadow" (Schubert). The choir accompaniments were well played by Miss Clara Hattersley. Mr. Arthur Bayliss, the popular organist and choirmaster of the Church, conducted, and acted as accompanist, also playing one of Chopin's Polonaises as a Pianoforte Solo.

#### PROVINCIAL.

BROMLEY.—The Congregational Church has just suffered a severe loss in the death of the pastor, the Rev. R. H. Lovell, who has been ill for some months. The choir took part in the funeral and memorial services, when they sang "Crossing the Bar," "The Homeland," "Who are these?" and "Blest are the departed."

DENTON.—A very successful Organ recital was given in the Haughton Green Wesleyan Chapel on the 11th ult., by Mr. William Lawton, A.L.C.M. (Organist of Free Church, Oldham). The Programme contained selections from Gounod, Morandi, Beethoven, Rossini, etc., which were well received. Vocal selections were given by Miss Lilian Webb (who was well received by the large audience) and Mr. A. E. Hayne.

HALESWORTH.—An Organ Recital was given in the Congregational Church on Nov. 29th, by Mr. R. D. Metcalfe, Mus. Bac. His programme included selections from the works of Handel, Guilimant, Mendelssohn, Kinross, Dubois, Merkel, and Smart. Miss L. Nash contributed vocal items.

**HALIFAX.**—The Wesleyans of King Cross Road have given the order for a new organ to Messrs. Norman Brothers and Beard, of Norwich. The instrument will cost £800.

**ILFORD.**—The Ilford Vocal Union and Orchestral Society gave a performance of Stainer's "Daughter of Jairus," and a miscellaneous selection, on November 29th in the Wesleyan Chapel, and repeated the programme at Barkingside on the 13th ult. The selection included Mendelssohn's "Athalia" overture, three numbers from Haydn's "Creation," Beethoven's "Hallelujah," Bennett's "God is a spirit," and other music. The principal parts were effectively sustained by Mrs. Sharpe, Miss Hennings, Mrs. May, Miss Atkins, Miss Storr, and Messrs. A. Barnes, A. Porter, Lofthouse and Wilson, all members of the Society. Conductor, Mr. A. Storr, L.T.C.L.

**LISCARD.**—On the 22nd November, the Liscard Congregational Church Choir gave a very successful and highly appreciated Concert in aid of the building fund of the new sister church at Seacombe. The Concert was under the direction of Mr. J. F. Shepherdson, the honorary organist and choirmaster. Amongst the items rendered by the Choir were "The Silent Tide," and "The Sun shall be no more," which were given by them in the Crystal Palace Choir competition last June, when they secured second place in the competition. Solos were also rendered by Misses Simms, Peskett, and Steel, and Messrs. Reader, Cowell, and Edwards. Mr. M. Murray also contributed selections from Verdi's "Il Trovatore," and Raff's "Cavatina," on the violin, both of which items were well received.

**LIVERPOOL.**—The annual concert in aid of the fund to provide Christmas dinners for the aged poor took place on Thursday, the 6th ult., in the Stanley Congregational Schoolroom. The seven part songs and glees rendered by the Stanley Choral Union, reflected great credit on the singers as well as on their esteemed conductor, Mr. S. J. Johnston. Mrs. Jean B. Gillison sang "The Promise of Life," and "Serenade" (A. Zuliani) with much feeling, and Madame Marianne Rea rendered, with evident satisfaction to the audience, the songs "St. Agnes' Eve" and "Ave Maria," by Mascagni, Miss Adele Grieves; a young lady of only twelve years, who is a double silver medallist, gave two violin solos "Tarantelle" (Bohm) and "Berceuse" (Daube) to the great delight of the audience, each time being recalled. Mr. Thomas Delaney's fine bass voice was heard to great advantage in the song "Oh, Oh, Hear the Wild Wind Blow," as well as in the recitative and air "A Father's Love," (Lurline); and Mr. P. T. Traynor (tenor) sang with pleasing effect "Madoline" and "An Evening Song" (Blumenthal). Mr. H. J. K. Henderson as humourist in Grossmith's "Juvenile Party," and an original sketch, completed an excellent programme. All the artists generously gave their services and the result was about £20 to the fund. Miss Lord accompanied several of the items with great taste, and Mr. W. C. Hyde, the organist, did good service in sustaining the accompanied glees, etc.

**PETERBOROUGH.**—A new two-manual organ of thirty-two stops has recently been opened in the Wentworth Street Wesleyan Chapel by Dr. Keeton and Mr. G. T. Patman. Mr. Isaac Gilson has served the Church as Organist and Choirmaster for twenty-five years and has done excellent work. Latterly his son and daughter have taken the organ duties, he retaining his position as Choirmaster.

**THORNTON HEATH.**—On Thursday, the 13th ult., a sacred Concert was given by the Thornton Heath Choral Society in the Congregational Church. Gaul's Cantata "Ruth," with orchestral accompaniments, formed the first part of the programme, the solo work

being taken by Miss Minnie Cowley, Miss Ada Weightman, Mrs. Chamberlain and Mr. J. G. Coldwells, all of whom sang with much acceptance. The second part of the programme was miscellaneous. Mr. R. Hainworth, F.R.C.O., presided at the organ, and Miss Downing at the piano. Mr. H. Sharland conducted.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—A sacred concert arranged by Mr. E. S. Goodes, organist and choirmaster at Trinity Congregational Church, was given in the Church on Tuesday evening the 11th ult., in aid of the choir funds. An excellent programme was admirably rendered by members of the choir and friends. Mr. Ernest W. E. Blandford was at the organ, and Mr. E. S. Goodes conducted. The concert opened with the organ solo, "Introduction, variations, and fugue on St. Alphege" (W. H. Maxfield), skilfully played by Mr. Blandford, who afterwards played "Cantilene in A minor," by Salome. The choir of Trinity maintained their reputation by their effective singing of some choruses, anthems, and a part song. In Handel's fine chorus, "O, Father, whose almighty power," the parts were taken with precision and were well sustained. The spirit of Mozart's anthem, "Ave, Verum," was finely expressed; Leslie's part song, "The Pilgrims," was well rendered, and Handel's grand "Hallelujah Chorus," with which the concert fittingly closed, was admirably sustained. Miss Grace Offer created a favourable impression by her singing of "The Lost Chord," and Mr. Frank H. Goodes was heard to advantage in the air "When thy father and mother forsake thee." Miss Jessie Grainger has a contralto voice of good quality and range, and she sang Handel's beautiful air, "Thou shalt bring them in," with much feeling. Miss Adele Kuhn sang the solo in Spohr's "As pants the hart," in pleasing style, the chorus parts being rendered very effectively. In Mendelssohn's "Hear my prayer," Miss Kuhn effectively interpreted the appealing spirit of the solo, and the appeal was finely taken up by the chorus. Mr. Wm. Allen sang "Nazareth" with success, and his pleasant bass voice was heard to distinct advantage in Handel's "Arm, arm ye brave," which he interpreted with befitting vigour. Mr. H. Graham Goodes sang with marked feeling Mendelssohn's recitative and air, "He counteth all your sorrows."

### Staccato Notes.

**RUBINSTEIN** had written two volumes of Memoirs, but destroyed them shortly before his death thinking that some of his criticisms of his contemporaries might be thought unkind.

THE "London Symphony Orchestra Company, (Limited)" with a capital of £25,000 has been promoted. The intention is to give seventy-two concerts per annum.

DVORAK is said to be working at a new opera upon the subject of Longfellow's "Hiawatha."

THE band and chorus for the recent Hereford Festival cost £1,676, and the fees paid to principal vocalists £1,165.

AN orchestral suite in five movements by Rubinstein will probably be performed at one of the Philharmonic Concerts in the summer.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN met with a slight accident while attending a rehearsal of his new comic opera at the Savoy Theatre.

THE annual conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians will be held in Dublin on the 1st to the 4th inst.

THE Second Musical Exhibition at the Aquarium was opened on the 12th ult.

AMONG the works selected for the next Cardiff Festival are Verdi's "Requiem," Berlioz's "Faust," Sullivan's "Light of the World," Brahms' "Song of

Destiny," Spohr's "Last Judgment," Mendelssohn's "St. Paul," Handel's "Messiah," a Wagner selection and Beethoven's Choral Symphony. The novelties will be a "Te Deum," by Sir J. Barnby, a cantata entitled "The Bard," by Villiers Stanford, a new symphony by Dvorak, and a new choral work by Mr. David Jenkins.

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SAUNDERS has a story of Dr. Braden when he was rector of Eltham, in Kent, who one day preached from the text, "Who art thou?" Just at the moment he announced it a military subaltern of the neighbouring post was walking up the aisle, and hearing the question he stopped, saluted, and said:

"I am, sir, an officer of the 17th Regiment of Foot on a recruiting party here."

A MINISTER of the name of Sparks, whose pastorate was in Scotland, was the father of thirteen children. At the baptism of the thirteenth, an aged brother divine, desirous to choose what seemed to him an appropriate description of the life of a man, called on the congregation to join in singing the fifth paraphrase beginning with the line "As sparks in close succession rise." So unconscious was he that he could not understand the people's titter until, when he descended from the pulpit, his pun was explained to him.

DID it ever occur to you that although the bass-drum doesn't make good music, it drowns a heap of bad?



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Professor. "What air was that?"

Susie (demurely). "Oh, it was a millionaire!"

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